

What is involved in baptismal preparation?

In preparation for the sacrament of holy baptism, you should contact your parish priest, who will arrange a time to meet with you and discuss your responsibilities as a parent and sponsor, the vows you will be making on behalf of the child, and the part you all play in the life of the Christian community.

What about baptism of an older child or adult?

In the case of older children or adults, your priest will prepare the candidates themselves for baptism, as they will be making a profession of faith on their own behalf. Such candidates are still required to have a sponsor to present them for baptism and to journey with them in their new life in Christ.

Who can be a sponsor (Godparent)?

Sponsors must be baptized Christians (by water and the Spirit), but it is not necessary that they worship in the Anglican tradition. Sponsors should be chosen based on their commitment to the life of the Christian community and their own baptismal vows.

What if I have other questions?

You may well have questions other than those covered here. Each individual and family has questions dealing with baptism. Feel free to contact your priest to make an appointment, or to discuss baptism, and the role this sacrament will play in your life and that of your family.

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The Anglican Parish of Battle Harbour

Norman Bay – Charlottetown – Pinsent's Arm – William's Harbour – Port Hope Simpson – St. Lewis – Mary's harbour – Lodge Bay

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM

Welcome!

As members of the Christian community we give thanks to God for the opportunity to celebrate with you on the joyous occasion of your baptism (or that of your child).

As Christians, we believe that God is the creator of all things, and that through the procreation, care, and nurture of children, our Creator gives parents a share in the work and joy of creation.



However, we who are born of earthly parents need to be *born again*. It is through faith in Christ and the waters of baptism, that God gives us the means to rebirth into a new life in relationship with him. Baptism is the sign and seal of this new birth in Christ.

In the bible we read of the risen Lord Jesus Christ commanding his followers to make disciples of all nations and to baptize people everywhere. The disciples obeyed his command, and we read of Peter preaching in these words:

Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.

– Acts 2:38-39

Infants, who are too young to profess the Christian faith on their own behalf, are baptized with the understanding that they will be brought up to trust and follow Christ as their Saviour and Lord, within the Christian community. As they grow up they need to

be nurtured and instructed in the Christian faith, so that they may learn to place their faith and trust in God, to worship and serve him, and to take their place in the life and ministry of the Church.

All of this, of course, depends primarily on the encouragement, help, and *example* they receive from their parents and sponsors (Godparents). As the ones presenting your child for baptism, it is important that you be able to affirm your own allegiance to Christ, to trust him as your Saviour and obey him as your Lord, and that you choose sponsors for your child who can do the same.

We, in this particular congregation of the Anglican Parish of Battle Harbour, will try to help you at each step along the way. To this end, all candidates (or parents) are required to complete some form of baptismal preparation, which will examine the Christian faith from the perspective of the Anglican tradition, as well as the meaning of baptism in the Christian family.

Here are some answers to questions commonly asked about the sacrament of baptism:

What if I am not an active member of the Church in this community?

If you are not currently a member of *any* church community, we warmly invite you to join us! Why not come along to one of our services?

If you are a member of another parish or church community (of any denomination), but would like to have your child baptized in one of the congregations of this parish, we require a letter from the rector or minister of your home parish. This letter must indicate that you have been duly prepared for baptism and give explicit consent to the administration of baptism in this parish. This is required because baptism is the sacrament of initiation – or *entry* – into the Church, and therefore it is important that your local church community be involved even when the baptism is taking place elsewhere.

What about private baptism?

In the sacrament of baptism, candidates are being welcomed into the fellowship of the Church – *into the household of God*. Therefore, it is important that the Church be present to offer them that welcome. For this reason, except in the case of emergencies, all baptisms administered in this parish are *public* and will take place within the context of congregational worship.

How do we choose a date for the baptism?

The parish will always strive to be flexible when setting a date for the baptism. However, there are certain days of the Church year (such as the *Baptism of our Lord*, the *Easter Vigil*, and the *Day of Pentecost*) which are especially appropriate for baptisms. Just as there are appropriate times for baptism, there are also times in the Church year when baptisms are inappropriate (such as the seasons of Advent, Lent, and during Holy Week). During these times, only emergency baptisms will be administered.

What if a child dies before they can be baptized?

The Anglican tradition rejects the notion that those who have died before having the opportunity for rebirth through the waters of baptism are condemned. However, the Church recognizes the distress that many parents feel when faced with this situation. Therefore, in response to the pastoral needs of the parents, there is a form for emergency baptism that can be administered by *any baptized Christian*. In the event that the child recovers, they are then publicly *received* into the Church by a deacon, priest, or bishop before the Christian community within the context of congregational worship. Emergency baptisms are recorded in the baptismal register of the appropriate parish.

